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Washington Memorials.

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HOUSE....No. 199.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 25, 1861.

Ordered, That one thousand extra copies of the Governor's Message, and accompanying papers, in relation to certain memorials of the ancestors of Washington, with the Report of the Committee upon the same, be printed for the use of the legislature.

WILLIAM STOWE, *Clerk.*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, COUNCIL CHAMBER,
BOSTON, March 15, 1861.

To the Honorable House of Representatives:—

I have the honor to present to the General Court, as a gift to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from one of its citizens, certain memorials of great historic interest.

The home and resting place of the ancestors of GEORGE WASHINGTON were until recently unvisited by, and unknown to Americans. In the genealogical table, appended to the Life of Washington by our distinguished fellow citizen, Mr. Jared Sparks, it is stated that Lawrence Washington, the father of John Washington, (who emigrated to Virginia in 1657,) was buried at Brington; but though both Mr. Sparks and Washington Irving visited Sulgrave, an earlier home of the Washingtons, neither of these learned biographers appear by their works to have repaired to this quiet parish in Northamptonshire.

Our fellow citizen, the Hon. Charles Sumner, on a recent visit to England, identified certain inscriptions in the parish church of Brington, near Althorp, as being those of the father and uncle of John Washington the emigrant to Virginia, who was the great grandfather of the father of his country.

Earl Spencer, the proprietor of Althorp, so honorably known as an early advocate of parliamentary reform, sought out the quarry from which, more than two centuries ago, these votive tablets were taken, and caused others to be made which are exact *fac-similes* of the originals. These he has presented to Mr. Sumner, who has expressed the desire that memorials, so interesting to all Americans, may be placed where they may be

seen by the public, and has authorized me to offer them to the Commonwealth, if it be pleasure of the legislature to order them to be preserved in some public part of the State House.

I send with this a letter addressed to myself by the learned historian of Washington, bearing testimony to the great interest of these memorials, and expressing the desire that they may (Mr. Sumner assenting) be placed in the capitol.

A letter from Mr. Sumner to Mr. Sparks also accompanies this Message, describing the church at Brington, and some of the associations which cluster around the resting-place of the ancestors of our Washington.

JOHN A. ANDREW.

MR. SPARKS TO THE GOVERNOR.

CAMBRIDGE, 22d February, 1861.

Dear Sir:—I enclose a copy of a highly interesting letter from Mr. Charles Sumner, describing the church at Brington, near Althorp, in Northamptonshire. In this church were deposited the remains of Lawrence Washington, who was the father of John and Lawrence Washington, the emigrants to America, and who was therefore the last English ancestor of George Washington. A copy of the inscription on the stone, which covers the grave of Lawrence Washington, and also of another inscription over the grave of his brother Robert Washington, who was buried in the same church, are given with exactness in Mr. Sumner's letter. As far as I am aware, these inscriptions are now for the first time made known in this country.

The Earl Spencer has sent to Mr. Sumner two stones, being from the same quarry, and having the same form and dimensions, as the originals, and containing a *fac-simile* of the inscriptions. It has been suggested that these stones ought to be placed in the State House, where they be accessible to the public, and my opinion on the subject has been asked. As they are unquestionably genuine memorials of the Washington family, and possess on this account a singular historical interest, I cannot imagine that a more appropriate disposition of them could be made. I understand that Mr. Sumner would cheerfully assent to such an arrangement, and I cannot doubt that your excellency will be well inclined to take such measures as may effectually aid in attaining so desirable an object.

I am, sir,

Very respectfully yours,

JARED SPARKS.

His Excellency JOHN A. ANDREW,
Governor of Massachusetts.

MR. SUMNER TO MR. SPARKS.

BOSTON, 22d November, 1860.

My Dear Sir:—Since our last conversation the Earl Spencer has kindly sent to me precise copies of the two "Memorial Stones," of the English family of George Washington, which I have already described to you as harmonizing exactly with the pedigree which has the sanction of your authority. These are of the same stone and of the same size with the originals and have the original inscriptions—being in all respects *fac-similes*. They will, therefore, give you an exact idea of these most interesting memorials in the parish church of Brington, near Althorp, in Northamptonshire.

The largest is of Lawrence Washington, the father of John Washington, who emigrated to America. It is a slab of bluish grey sandstone, and measures five feet and nine inches long and two feet and seven inches broad.

Here is the inscription:—

HERE LIETH THE BODI OF LAVRENCE
WASHINGTON SONNE AND HEIRE OF
ROBERT WASHINGTON OF SOVLGRAVE
IN THE COUNTIE OF NORTHAMPTON
ESQUIER WHO MARRIED MARGARET
THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM
BUTLER OF TEES IN THE COUNTIE
OF SUSSEXE ESQUIER, WHO HAD ISSU
BY HER 8 SONNS AND 9 DAUGHTERS
WHICH LAVRENCE DECESSED THE 13
OF DECEMBER A. DNI 1616.

THOU THAT BY CHANCE OR CHOYCE
OF THIS HAST SIGHT
KNOW LIFE TO DEATH RESIGNES
AS DAYE TO NIGHT;
BUT AS THE SUNNS RETORNE
REVIVES THE DAY
SO CHRIST SHALL US
THOUGH TURNDE TO DUST & CLAY.

Above the inscription, carved in the stone, are the arms of the Washingtons, with an additional quartering of another family.

The other is of Robert Washington, and of Elizabeth his wife. Robert was the uncle of the emigrant. This is a slab of the same sandstone, and measures three feet and five inches long, and two feet and six inches broad. The inscription is on a small brass plate set into the stone, and is as follows :—

HERE LIES INTERRED Y^E BODIES OF ELIZAB. WASHINGTON WIDDOWE WHO CHANGED THIS LIFE FOR IMORTALITIE Y^E 19^H OF MARCH 1622. AS ALSO Y^E BODY OF ROBERT WASHINGTON GENT. HER LATE HUSBAND SECOND SONNE OF ROBERT WASHINGTON OF SOLGRAVE IN Y^E COUNTY OF NORTH. ESQ^R. WHO DEPTED THIS LIFE Y^E 10TH OF MARCH 1622. AFTER THEY LIVED LOVINGLY TOGETHER MANY YEARS IN THIS PARISH.

On a separate brass, beneath the inscription, are the arms of the Washingtons without any addition. These, as you are well aware, have the combination of stars and stripes, and are sometimes supposed to have suggested our national flag. In heraldic language, there are bars of gules and argent with three mullets or stars.

In the interesting chapter on the Origin and Genealogy of the Washington Family, which you give in the Appendix to your Life of Washington, it appears that Lawrence, the father of the emigrant, died 13th December, and was buried at Brington 15th December, 1616. But the genealogical tables, which you followed, gave no indication of the locality of this church. Had it appeared that it was the parish church of the Spencer Family in Northamptonshire, the locality, which I believe has not been heretofore known in our country, would have been precisely fixed.

In point of fact, the slab which covers Lawrence Washington is in the chancel of the church, by the side of the monuments of the Spencer Family. These are all in admirable preservation, with full length effigies, busts or other sculptural work, and exhibit an interesting and connected series of sepulchral memorials from the reign of Henry VIII. to the present time. Among them is a monument by the early English sculptor, Nicholas Stone; another by Nollekins from a design by Cipriani, and another by Flaxman, with exquisitely beautiful personifica-

tions of Faith and Charity. Beneath repose the successive representatives of this illustrious family which has added to its aristocratic claims by services to the State, and also by the unique and world-famous library collected by one of its members. In this companionship will be found the last English ancestor of our Washington.

The other slab, covering Robert, the uncle of the emigrant, is in one of the aisles of the nave where it is scraped by the feet of all who pass.

The parish of Brington is between seven and eight miles from the town of Northampton, not far from the centre of England. It is written in Domesday Book "Brinintone" and also "Brintone." It contains about 2,210 acres, of which about 1,490 acres belong to Earl Spencer, about 326 acres to the rector in right of the church, and about 130 acres to other persons. The soil is in general a dark colored loam with a small trace of clay towards the north. Nearly four-fifths of the whole is pasture and feeding land.

In the village still stands the house, said to have been occupied by the Washingtons when the emigrant brother left them. You will see a vignette of it on the title-page of the recent English work, entitled *The Washingtons*. Over the door are carved the words, "The Lord giveth; the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord," while the Parish Register gives a pathetic commentary by showing that, in the very year when this house was built, a child had been born and another had died in this family.

The church, originally dedicated to the Virgin, stands at the north-east angle of the village, and consists of an embattled tower with five bells, a nave, north and south aisles, a chancel, a chapel, and a modern porch. The tower is flanked by buttresses of two stages. The present fabric goes back in its origin to the beginning of the 14th century, nearly two hundred years before the discovery of America. The chancel and chapel, where repose the Spencers and Lawrence Washington, were rebuilt by Sir John Spencer, the purchaser of the estate, at the beginning of the 16th century. They afford one of the latest specimens of the Tudor style of architecture. The church is beautifully situated on the summit of the highest ground of Brington, and is surrounded by a stone wall flanked on the inside by trees.

Dibdin says that a more complete picture of a country church-yard is rarely seen. A well-trimmed walk encircles the whole of the interior, while the fine Gothic windows at the end of the chancel fill the scene with picturesque beauty.

The Register of the Parish, which is still preserved, commences in 1560. From this it appears that Wm. Proctor was the rector from 1601 to 1627, covering the period of the last of the Washingtons there. The following further entries occur relating to this family :—

1616. "Mr. Lawrence Washington was buried XVth day of December."

1620. "Mr. Philip Curtis & Mis Amy Washington were married August 8."

1622. "Mr. Robert Washington was buried March ye 11th."

—— "Mrs. Elizabeth Washington, widow, was buried March ye 20th."

Of one of the ministers in this church we have an interesting glimpse in Evelyn's Memoirs, (vol. I., p. 612,) where the following entry will be found under date of July, 1688: "Dr. Jeffryes, the minister of Althorp, who was my lord's chaplain when Ambassador in France, *preached the shortest discourse I ever heard;* but what was defective in the amplitude of his sermon, he had supplied in the largeness and convenience of the parsonage house."

At a short distance—less than a mile—is Althorp, the seat of the Spencers, surrounded by a park of five hundred acres, of which one of the gates opens near the church. There are oak trees, bordering on the church-yard, which were growing at the time of the purchase of the estate in the reign of Henry VII. Evelyn was often here a delighted visitor. On one occasion he speaks of "the house or rather palace at Althorp." (Vol. I., p. 612.) In another place he describes it as "placed in a pretty open bottom, very finely watered and flanked with stately woods and groves in a park." (Vol. I., p. 451.) Let me add that there is an engraving of Althorp at this time, by the younger Vosterman, a Dutch artist.

There is one feature of the park which excited the admiration of Evelyn, and at a later day of Mrs. Jameson, who gives to it some beautiful pages in her Visits and Sketches at Home

and Abroad. It is the record of the time when different plantations of trees was begun. While recommending this practice in his *Sylva*, Evelyn remarks, "the only instance I know of the like in our country, is in the park at Althorp." There are six of these commemorative stones. The first records a wood planted by Sir John Spencer, in 1567 and 1568; the second, a wood planted by Sir John Spencer, son of the former, in 1589; the third, a wood planted by Robert Lord Spencer, in 1602 and 1603; the fourth, a wood planted by Sir William Spencer, Knight of the Bath, afterwards Lord Spencer, in 1624. The latter stone is ornamented with the arms of the Spencers, and on the back is inscribed "Up and bee doing and God will prosper." It was in this scenery and amidst these associations that the Washingtons lived. When the emigrant left in 1657, these woods must have been well-grown. It was not long afterwards that they arrested the attention of Evelyn.

The Household Books at Althorp show that for many years the Washingtons were frequent guests there. The hospitality of this seat has been renowned. The Queen of James I., and the Prince Henry on their way to London, in 1603, were welcomed there in an entertainment, memorable for a masque from the vigorous muse of Ben Jonson. (Ben Jonson's Works, vol. VI., p. 475.) Charles I. was at Althorp, in 1647, when he received the first intelligence of the approach of those pursuers from whom he never escaped until his life had been laid down upon the scaffold. In 1698, King William was there for a week, and according to Evelyn was "mightily entertained." (Vol. II., p. 50.) At least one of the members of this family was famous for hospitality of a different character. Evelyn records that he used to dine with the Countess of Sunderland, —the title then borne by the Spencers,—"when she invited *fire-eaters*, stone-eaters, and opera-singers, after the fashion of the day." (Vol. I., pp. 458, 483, 579.)

The family was early and constantly associated with literature; Spencer, the poet, belonged to it, and to one of its members he has dedicated his "Tears of the Muses." It was for Alice Spencer that Milton is said to have written his *Arcades*, and Sir John Harrington has celebrated her memory by an epigram. The Sacharissa of Waller was the Lady Dorothy Sidney, wife of the first Earl of Sunderland, the third Lord Spencer,

THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY CHICAGO

who perished fighting for King Charles I. at Newbury. I do not dwell on the other associations of a later day, as my object is simply to allude to those which existed in the time of the Washingtons.

"The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the Fairy Queen as the most precious jewel of their coronet." Thus wrote Gibbon in his memoirs, and all must feel the beauty of the passage. Perhaps it is not too much to say that this nobility may claim another illustration from its ties of friendship and neighborhood with the family of Washington. I cannot doubt that hereafter the parish church of Brington will be often visited by our countrymen, who will look with reverence upon a spot so closely associated with American history.

I trust that this little sketch, suggested by what I saw at Althorp, during a brief visit last autumn, will not seem irrelevant. Besides my own personal impressions, and the volumes quoted, I have relied upon Dibdin's *Ædes Althorpianæ*, so interesting to all bibliographical students, and especially upon Baker's History of Northamptonshire,—one of those magnificent local works which illustrate English history—to which you refer in your Appendix, but which was not completed till sometime after the Life of Washington appeared.

Of course, the Memorial Stones, which I have received from Lord Spencer, are of much historic value, and I think that I shall best carry out the generous idea of the giver by taking care that they are permanently placed where they can be seen by the public; perhaps at the State House near Chantry's beautiful statue of Washington,—if this should be agreeable to the Commonwealth.

Pray pardon this long letter, and believe me, my dear sir, with much regard,

Ever sincerely yours,

CHARLES SUMNER.

JARED SPARKS, Esq.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

House of Representatives, March 23, 1861.

The Committee on the State House, to whom was referred the Message of His Excellency the Governor, presenting to the General Court as a gift from Hon. Charles Sumner, certain memorials of Washington, of great historic interest, report that they consider it a matter of special congratulation that the interesting facts concerning the Father of his country, contained in the papers accompanying the message should have been first made known to us by a citizen of Massachusetts, and deeming it important that these valuable memorials should be permanently preserved, in the capitol of the State, they report the accompanying Resolves.

Per order,

R. WARD.

1719274

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-One.

RESOLVES

In relation to certain Memorials of the Ancestors of Washington.

Resolved, That the thanks of the general court be and hereby are presented to Hon. Charles Sumner, for his interesting and patriotic gift to the Commonwealth, of two memorial tablets in imitation of the originals which mark the resting-place of the ancestors of George Washington.

Resolved, That the commissioners on the State house cause the same to be prepared and placed, with appropriate inscriptions, in some convenient place in the Doric Hall of the State house, near the statue of Washington.

DAILY MAGAZINE

"WASHINGTONIA."

Making a New Mecca for American Pilgrims in Northamptonshire.

It is frequently contended that the general knowledge possessed by travelled Americans regarding our many ancient institutions and places of historic interest far exceeds that displayed by the average Britisher, whose apathy and lack of patriotism in this particular direction have often been deplored.

The man from Boston, allowing himself just one month in which to take in Europe, will usually know more about Westminster Abbey than the Londoner born and bred. Many reasons have been advanced in support of this contention, but, undoubtedly, the primary cause is the comparative absence in the younger country of similar institutions and the inherent thirst of its people for a thorough knowledge respecting a land having such close ties with their own. It is therefore all the more remarkable to reflect that the one spot in this land of ours which possesses (or should possess) attractions sufficient to render it a veritable Mecca to all patriotic American tourists has, heretofore, been quite neglected and is comparatively unknown.

While it is both flattering and satisfactory to know that a large and ever-increasing sum of American money finds its way annually into Stratford-on-Avon and other centres of historic interest in Great Britain, one cannot but marvel at the almost total absence of [illegible] Great [illegible] [illegible] are [illegible] the [illegible] most [illegible]

[illegible] that, up to within [illegible] little authentic [illegible] respecting the [illegible] Washington genealogical tree [illegible] cipally of the exhaustive but [illegible] unfruitful search for traces of the [illegible] of the two Virginia emigrants [illegible] Lawrence Washington and his wife [illegible] lis. From 1791, when Sir [illegible] first started this interesting genealogical inquiry, up to 1892, when Mr. Henry [illegible] was able to convert his "theory of identity" into an indisputable fact, few questions of a similar nature have excited keener controversy than that of "the cradle of the Washingtons." And it may safely be added that more "authentic solutions" have certainly never been advanced than those embraced in the unravelling of this ancient and [illegible] lineage.

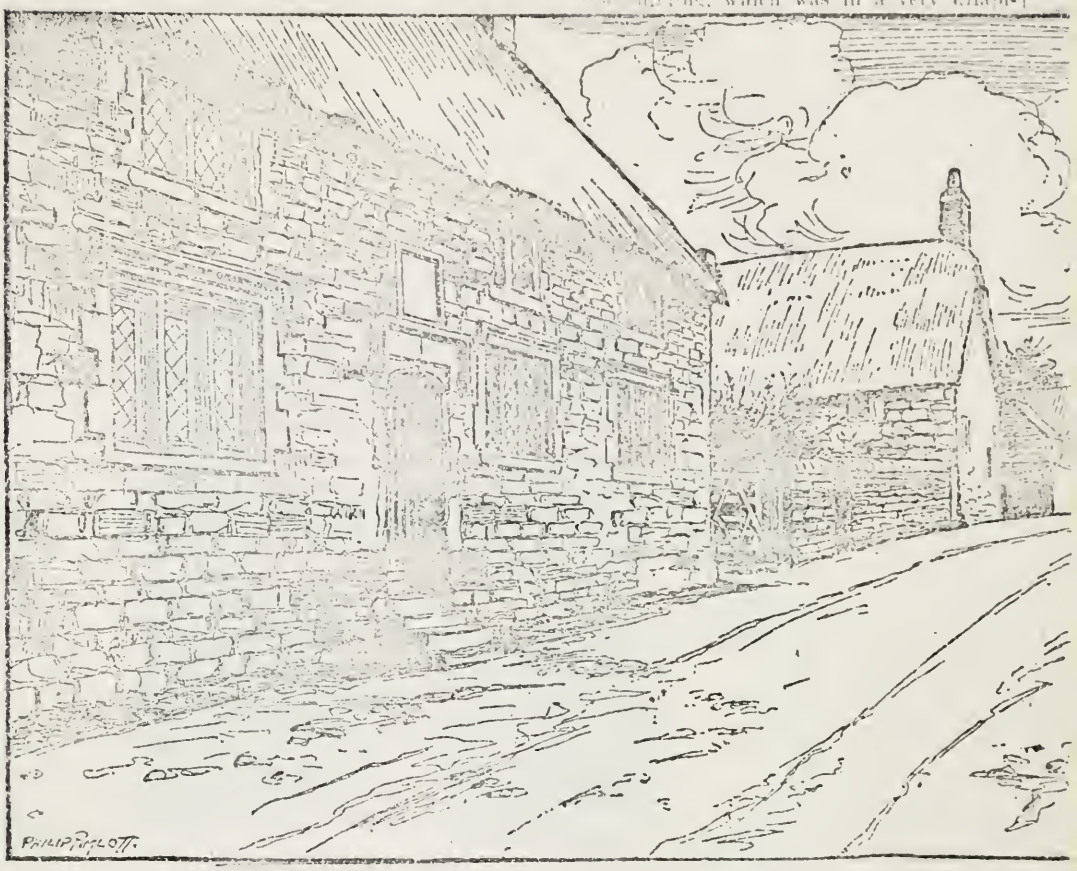
But the old order changeth. [illegible] year will find the old church of St. [illegible] Great Brington, Northamptonshire (wherein

THE NEW MECCA, NOW BEING PREPARED FOR AMERICAN TOURISTS IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

THE WASHINGTON CHURCH, GREAT BRINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

repose the ancestors of the man who helped so much to make America what she is to-day), belong to the outfit of many a devoted and wealthy pilgrim.

The latter has recently been taken up by a number of influential men, who, during the approaching season, purpose organising a series of coaching tours and special ex-

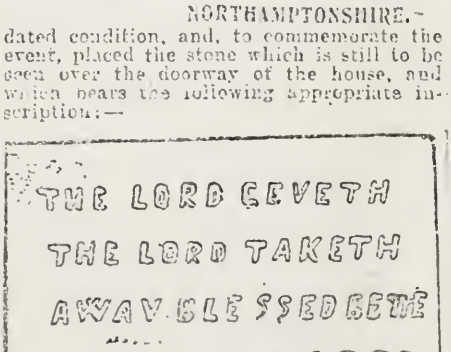


WASHINGTON HOUSE, GREAT BRINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

cursions to Brington on lines similar to those already employed in other directions. It is therefore only fair to surmise that—at any rate so far as Americans are concerned—the Washington tour will soon become as popular as the Shakespeare tour to Stratford-on-Avon, in and around which place the pilgrims are calculated to spend some £30,000 a year.

The attractions are almost identical, for while at Stratford we have Shakespeare's tomb and Anne Hathaway's cottage, at Brington may be seen, in equal preservation, numerous tombs of the Washingtons and Washington House, where-

dated condition, and, to commemorate the event, placed the stone which is still to be seen over the doorway of the house, and which bears the following appropriate inscription:—



In their tribulations, which lasted for many years, the Washingtons were comforted and greatly assisted by the Spencers of Althorp, with whom they claimed blood relationship, and whose descendant (in the person of the present Earl Spencer, K.G.) still owns the whole of the surrounding

in lived several generations of the family, including the parents of the two emigrants. This old-fashioned, thatched building, of ancient date, was first occupied by the Washingtons in 1606, when, after serious reverses, Lawrence Washington, the then reigning lord of Sulgrave Manor, some fifteen miles distant, migrated with his wife and family to Brington. He then restored the building, which was in a very dilapi-

property. From 1610 to 1622 the was occupied by Robert Washingt his wife Elizabeth, who, having no c of their own, had adopted Amy, a d of the elder brother Lawrence. Upo decease, in March 1622, within nine each other, the house was occupied nephew, the Rev. Lawrence Wash with his family of five children, co of three daughters and two sons, th being the two emigrants who set Virginia in 1657.

About this time so close a friend isted between the Spencers and the ingtons as to justify the supposition it was by the former's special des the simple and comparatively small ington vault in St. Mary's, Great Br should actually adjoin the elabora more extensive mausoleum of the S

WASHINGTON'S FOREBEARS.

To the Editor of the "Daily Mail."

Perhaps you will permit me to contest the statement that Mr. Waters has converted Sir Isaac Heard's "theory of identity" (of the Northamptonshire family of Washington with that of Wakefield, Virginia) "into an indisputable fact." There are American antiquaries who dispute Mr. Waters's conclusions.

Mr. Waters does not provide a scintilla of direct evidence connecting the Northamptonshire family with that of the illustrious hero of the American Revolution. My own careful researches provide strong evidence that both the Washington family of Virginia, and that of Bavaria—the latter ennobled in the early part of the last century—both originated from the district in Yorkshire between Wakefield and Doncaster.

The tombs of the family may be found in the beautiful church of St. Lawrence, Adwick-le-Street. I have been able to provide links of evidence taken from the registers of this church along with tracings of the tombs for the American Press, and their publication will be interesting, as showing that the claims of the Yorkshire branch are at least as great as those of that of Northamptonshire. I believe the bulk of the opinion will be in favour of the former as the family from which George Washington is directly descended.

B. H. Thwaite.

29, Great George-street, S.W.

Daily Mail 5 April 1901

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